

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11 /080 W
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P 291730Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9817

INFO AMCONGEN BELIZE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

SAN JOSE 4422

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, GT, UK, BH

SUBJ: PRICE INTERVIEW BY GUATEMALAN JOURNALIST

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. PRESITGIOUS AFTERNOON NEWSPAPER EL IMPARCIAL JANUARY 28
GAVE FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE TO AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW BETWEEN
PREMIER PRICE AND REPORTER EDUARDO RODRIQUEZ. ACCORDING TO
REPORT PRICE SAID "BELIZE IS WILLING TO ASSOCIATE WITH GUATEMALA
ONCE IT HAS OBTAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM GREAT BRITAIN."
HE ADDED THAT BELIZE HAD NOTHING AGAINST GUATEMALA, BUT
DESIRES THAT THE GUATEMALANS "RECOGNIZE OUR RIGHT TO SELF-
DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF BELIZE AS AN INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN
STATE."

2. PRICE SAID THAT HE WOULD ATTEND THE UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS
IN ORDER TO SEEK COMPLIANCE WITH THE UN RESOLUTION, THAT IS,
RECOGNITION OF BELIZE'S RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION,
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TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND INDEPENDENCE.

3. "AN INDEPENDENT BELIZE WOULD HAVE NOT ONLY THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ASSOCIATION WITH GUATEMALA BUT ALSO ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN INTEGRATION PROCESS AS AN EQUAL. BELIZE BELONGS TO THE CARICOM, BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT BELIZE COULD NOT JOIN IN ISTHMIAN INTEGRATION."

4. "OUR CENTRAL AMERICAN BROTHERS, THE GUATEMALANS, DO NOT KNOW THE SITUATION IN BELIZE WELL. THEY BELIEVE THAT BELIZE IS AN OPPRESSED COUNTRY OR THAT THE BELIZEANS CANNOT MANAGE THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS. THEY BELIEVE THAT WE ARE ILLITERATE AND THAT WE LIVE IN MISERY. ACTUALLY, BELIZE IS A SMALL COUNTRY FIGHTING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT."

5. BELIZE, ACCORDING TO PRICE, HAS SUFFICIENT INCOME TO COVER CURRENT EXPENSES, ALTHOUGH IT WILL HAVE TO HAVE RECOURSE TO FOREIGN AID AND BORROWING FOR ITS CAPITAL INVESTMENT. "BUT WHAT COUNTRY IN THE WORLD DOESNOT HAVE TO BORROW FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT?" ASKED PRICE.

6. PRICE DENIED THAT ANY IMMINENT DATE HAD BEEN FIXED FOR INDEPENDENCE, AND HE EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS A COMPLICATED PROCESS CONSUMING SOME TIME AFTER FIRST STEPS ARE TAKEN. END UNCLASSIFIED.

7. COMMENT: IF PREMIER PRICE'S OBJECTIVE WAS TO GET PROMIENT AND APPARENTLY ACCURATE COVERAGE OF HIS VIEWS PRIOR TO FEBRUARY'S NEGOTIATING SESSION, HE HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL. UNFORTUNATELY, HIS INSISTENCE ON LINKING THE UPCOMING TALKS TO THE UNGA RESOLUTION MAY PROVOKE A PRIVATE AND PUBLIC GOG REACTION(SEE GUATEMALA 520) WHICH WILL ALTER WHAT HAD PROMISED TO BE AN AMICABLE ATMOSPHERE FOR THE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS.
ANDREWS

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